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SUBJECT: NEPAL: UPDATE ON MAOIST ACTIVITIES, NOV 2-14

REF: Kathmandu 2148

SUMMARY

1. Maoist bombs claimed the lives of at least two children during the last two weeks, adding to the more than 100 children reported killed by the ongoing violence. Among other incidents taking place during the same period, 50 Village Development Committee offices and at least 20 post offices were destroyed; civilians as well as soldiers were killed and injured in petrol bomb and mine attacks on passenger buses and other vehicles; offices of a project in the Annapurna Conservation Area were looted and demolished; and the King Mahendra Conservation Trust was bombed for the second time. A small explosive device was also detonated in the toilet of the popular Tiger Mountain travel agency.

2. Additional violence continued throughout the nationwide strike from November 11-13 (reftel), and Maoist leadership has called for another "concrete program of agitation," with dates and details to be announced. End summary.

MAOIST VIOLENCE STRIKES CHILDREN

3. A 12-year-old mentally disabled boy died instantly and three others were seriously injured by a bomb in Banepa Municipality, approximately 30 miles southeast of Kathmandu. The boy was walking past a garbage heap when a bomb planted there by Maoists exploded. In a similar incident, a 14-year-old boy was killed and a 10-year-old boy and their guardian were seriously injured in an explosion as they walked to school in western Doti district on November 13. The boys and their guardian were traveling by foot because of the general strike called by the insurgents, and were injured when a Maoist bomb detonated near the road.

4. Nepali human rights watch group INSEC estimates that more than 100 children have been killed since the start of the Maoist insurgency. According to INSEC, 62 children (38 boys and 24 girls) have been killed by government forces, while Maoists have killed 44 children (30 boys and 14 girls).

REBELS DESTROY VDC OFFICES

5. Maoist insurgents destroyed 25 Village Development Committee (VDC) offices in central Gulmi district during the weekend of November 2-3 and attacked two dozen VDCs in Kapilbastu district on November 7, burning buildings, records and documents. Local officials called the attack in Kapilbastu, which borders India, the most extensive operation ever launched in the district by the Maoists. The Ministry of Local Development has reported that insurgents have destroyed more than 1,300 VDC offices nationwide, nearly one-third of all VDCs in Nepal. The Ministry estimates that total losses from the attacks, which also target health posts and other government-owned installations, amount to nearly 284 million rupees (3.6 million USD).

POSTAL WORKER KILLED;
MAIL SERVICE PARALYZED

6. One postman was beheaded and another severely beaten by Maoists on November 9, on suspicion of providing information to government forces in central Makwanpur district. Maoist attacks on post offices have left many remote villages, already without telephone connections, cut off from communication with the rest of the country. Postal workers fear attack if they venture into remote areas to deliver mail. According to the Department of Postal Service (DPS), a majority of local post offices in Nepal's hilly and mountainous regions have either been destroyed by Maoists or moved to district headquarters.

7. Though the impact of the insurgency on postal service in the Terai has been called "negligible" by DPS officials, Maoists reportedly have destroyed 20 post offices in

southern Dang district in the last year as part of their campaign to disrupt government infrastructure in the district, which borders India. The insurgents have destroyed 439 post offices in total, with the mid-eastern development region the most affected. Damage has been estimated at 17.1 million rupees (218,000 USD).

MAOISTS DESTROY CROWDED BUS, MINE HIGHWAYS AND LOOT PASSENGERS

18. A bus conductor and a passenger were killed and 14 others injured when Maoists attacked a bus crowded with holiday passengers in southern Sarlahi district on November 4. The bus caught fire, skidded 100 meters and flipped onto its roof after Maoists hurled petrol bombs at the front of the vehicle. Two days earlier, Maoists in Bara district looted three busloads of passengers and a truck. According to local police, Maoists erected a barricade across a highway, forcing the vehicles to stop. Passengers and staff were taken into the surrounding forest and robbed of their belongings and cash. The truck was looted of 270,000 rupees (3500 USD) worth of goods. Local police report that this is the first case of coordinated robbery of several vehicles in one night by Maoists in the southern district. On November 10, passengers were ordered out of a bus on its way from Kathmandu to Biratnagar before Maoists set the vehicle and passenger belongings ablaze.

19. At least one person was killed and 20 others injured when their passenger bus detonated a Maoist landmine in northeastern Dolakha district on November 14. Two persons were killed instantly when their private van drove over a mine planted by the Maoists near Birgunj along the Indian border on November 9. In both incidents, authorities have speculated that the mine was intended for security forces. Three soldiers were injured when their truck detonated a mine planted by Maoists on the Pasang Lhamu Highway in central Nuwakot district.

KING MAHENDRA TRUST AND ACAP OFFICES ATTACKED

10. On November 1, the King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation was bombed for the second time, injuring one person and causing minor damage to the Kathmandu office. The Trust is chaired by Crown Prince Paras.

11. On November 8, Maoists looted and destroyed the offices of an Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP) in Ghandruk, situated on the route to the Annapurna Base Camp. The ACAP office was approached by 40-50 Maoists, who looted the building of computers and other electronic equipment before burning it to the ground. ACAP, which is a subsidiary of KMTNC, is chiefly concerned with the conservation of culture and national heritage.

SMALL BOMB EXPLODES IN TIGER MOUNTAIN TOILET

12. A suspected Maoist detonated a small bomb in the toilet of the Tiger Mountain travel agency in Kathmandu on November 10, causing minimal damage. No one was injured in the blast. Tiger Mountain CEO Kristjan Edwards said that the suspected Maoist posed as a customer and made bookings for 12 Italian tourists before placing the bomb in the toilet.

MAOISTS CALL FOR MORE VIOLENCE

13. Terming the November 11-13 nationwide strike "a success with the continuous support of the public," Maoist leadership issued a press statement appealing to political parties for a round-table conference and lambasting the Palace. The statement further proclaims that "protest programs will be continued" until the Maoists' demands are met, and that a "concrete program of agitation will soon be declared and publicized."

MALINOWSKI